PLANET
COMICS
10c
No.49
JULY
AURO Lord of Jupiter in
WEREWOLVES from
HYDRA-HELL
MYSTA of the MOON
FUTURA - STARGIRATE
AND MANY OTHERS

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FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINES

A FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINE

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NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS (No. 50, SEPT.) ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSSTAND JULY 10th.

THE Lost WORLD
by THORNECLIFF HERRICK
IT WAS A FIENDISH DEVIL-KINGDOM FROM THE OUTER VOID THAT SPAWNED THOSE LOATHSOME VOLTANS, AND SPEWED THEM FORTH IN MONSTER SPACESHIPS AGAINST THE OTHER SKY-WORLDS. SO EARTH LAY SHATTERED AND DEVASTATED FROM THEIR AWESOME BLOWS. YET SOME FEW EARTHLING SURVIVORS WITH IMMORTAL COURAGE UNITED IN RESISTANCE. HUNT BOWMAN WAS THEIR LEADER, AND LYSSA, HIS FAITHFUL COMPANION. AND NOW THEY STOOD BEFORE THE MONUMENT AT BUNKER HILL...
Renée
WHY WOULD PEOPLE WASTE TIME AND LABOR TO BUILD SUCH A TOWER?
BECAUSE, HUNT, THIS MARKS THE BIRTHPLACE OF FREEDOM. IT WAS HERE THE WORLD LEARNED THAT NO MATTER HOW GREAT THE ODDS, RIGHT WILL TRIUMPH.
THEN THAT APPLIES TO US IN OUR FIGHT AGAINST THE VOLTAMEN. WE MUST NEVER GIVE UP!
NEVER..THIS CURSED BODY I WEAR WILL EVER BE A SYMBOL OF THEIR CRUELTY. BUT COME. THE OUTPOST IS IN AN OLD SHIP, NAMED THE "CONSTITUTION." THE WATCHER REPORTED VOLTAMEN IN THE VICINITY.
1

AS AHEAD...
BY SATURN'S CIRCLES, IF THIS EARTHMAN KNOWS WHERE HE THAT CURSED BOWMAN FIND, HE TELL WILL!
WAIT, COMRADE, THESE PAPERS HE TRIED TO HIDE. I THINK MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT BOWMAN ARE. HIM TO THE MAST TIE!
ONE CHANCE TO LIVE, EARTH SCUM, I GIVE. THESE WRITINGS WILL YOU TRANSLATE? SPEAK!
NO, I WON'T DO IT! YOU'LL NEVER MAKE ME!
ENOUGH! WE TIME WASTE. THE SHIP FIRE!
THAT I DIE MATTERS NOT, BUT THAT HUNT BOWMAN WILL NEVER LEARN MY SECRET MEANS ALL IS LOST!
COME, HE IN THE FLAME DIES! THAT EXPEDITION FROM BLESSED VOLTA SOON BE LANDING WILL. AND SOME SCIENTISTS ON BOARD THESE PAPERS SURELY READ CAN. HOW OUR SPACESHIP BOARD!
WHILE...
FROM BUT A HANDFUL, OUR OUTPOSTS HAVE GROWN UNTIL NOW THEY NUMBER OVER A THOUSAND! WAIT! WHAT'S THAT?
A FIRE, HUNT! AND NEAR THE DOCKS!
QUICK, THAT'S WHERE BRUCE SAID OUR OUTPOST'S HIDEOUT IS!
YES, IT'S THE "CONSTITUTION". LOOK!
THERE'S A MAN TIED TO THE MAST. HE'S BEING BURNED ALIVE!

WHILE, ON VOLTA...
TIME AND AGAIN THE ARMY TO RID EARTH OF LIFE HAS TRIED AND FAILED. NOW WE SCIENTISTS A CHANCE HAVE!
YES, LORENTO. AND SUCCEED WE WILL. MY LIFE ON THAT I STAKE...
FOR NO LIVING THING CAN THE HYPNOSPHERE ESCAPE. LOOK, THEY INTO OUR SPACE SHIP IT NOW LOWER.
SO ALL IN READINESS IS. WE TO THE CABIN WILL RETIRE, AND ON OUR WAY OUR PLANS REVIEW!
THIS ANCIENT MAP OF CONTINENT NORTH AMERICA OBSERVE. AND HERE IN THIS AREA, VIRGINIA CALLED, WE LAND WILL.
MEANWHILE...
AN EARTHLING! BACK, MAN, GO BACK! LEAVE ME OR YOU TOO WILL DIE!
NO, THERE'S STILL HOPE! AH, YOU'RE FREE! I'LL HAVE YOU ASHORE IN A JIFFY!
HUNT'S GOT HIM, LYSSA. HE'LL MAKE IT!
BUT LOOK, BRUCE, THAT FALLING MAST. IT'S GOING TO CRUSH THEM!

WHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE. MISSED US BY INCHES!
I'M HUNT BONMAN. TRY HARD TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED!
THE FIRE TOUCHED HIS LUNGS. SPEAK MAN - YOU MUST!
BONMAN...OUR LEADER... THANK HEAVENS...LISTEN CAREFULLY...RIGHT AFTER VOLTA INVASION, ATOMIC EX...
YES...ATOMIC EXPERTS PREPARED COMPLETE DATA ON IT... THEN HID IT IN A TIME CAPSULE IN LURAY CAVERNS...I HAD PAPER WITH LOCATION DESCRIBED... VOLTAMEN TOOK IT. OHHH....
HE'S DEAD, BUT WE HAVE HIS STORY.
LATER...
THE ATOM BOMBS, I READ OF THEM WHEN I WAS A CHILD. WHY, THEIR POWER WOULD EQUAL THE VOLTAMEN'S UNHOLY WEAPONS.
YES, AND WE'VE GOT TO GET THOSE PAPERS BEFORE THE VOLTAMEN DO. VIRGINIA IS A LONG WAY OFF, BUT I HAVE A PLAN. HURRY!
LATER...
AH, COMRADES, I MISTAKEN WAS NOT THAT THE SPECIAL SHIP WITH OUR SCIENTISTS LANDING IS. THEY THIS OLD MAN'S PAPER TRANSLATE WILL!
HE IT TO DESTROY TRIED. CAN YOU IT READ, LORENTO?
CERTAINLY! SOME IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT IN A CAVE HERE IN VIRGINIA HIDDEN IS. MOST INTERESTING!
BROTHERS, A MAP HERE WITH THE WAY TO THAT CAVE SHOWS. WE OUR HYPNOSPHERE IN THAT VICINITY TEST WILL!
4

As...
BY SOME LUCKY CHANCE THAT OLD TRAIN ESCAPED THE VOLTA DEVASTATION. IT'S GOING TO TAKE US TO VIRGINIA!
AND BELIEVE ME, BRUCE, IT MAY LOOK ANTIQUATED ALONGSIDE OF A SPACESHIP, BUT IT'S GOT PLENTY OF SPEED!
BUT DO YOU KNOW HOW TO RUN IT?
SURE! LYSSA WILL BE THE ENGINEER AND YOU AND I WILL BE FIREMEN. ALL ABOARD!
THE GAUGE SHOWS YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF STEAM UP! WE'RE OFF!
I'LL OPEN HER WIDE, LYSSA. WE'VE GOT TO GET THAT HIDDEN CAPSULE BEFORE THE VOLTAMEN LOCATE IT!
YES, WITH ALL THEIR DEVILISH CONTRIVANCES, THERE'S STILL NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY HAVE LEARNED HOW TO SPLIT THE ATOM!
AND IF THEY DO... THEN OUR FIGHT AGAINST THEM IS HELPLESS!
MEANWHILE...
COLUMN, HALT! LORENTO, IN THE SPACESHIP ABOVE SPEAKS!
HYPNOSPHERE UNLOAD! HERE WE OUR EXPERIMENT TRY WILL. WE LANDING NOW ARE!
TO ALL COMRADES, ZETA RAY GLASSES ISSUE. AFTER ALL LIFE IN THIS VICINITY DESTROYED IS, WE THAT CAVE ENTER WILL AND THAT EARTHMAN'S HIDDEN CAPSULE FIND.
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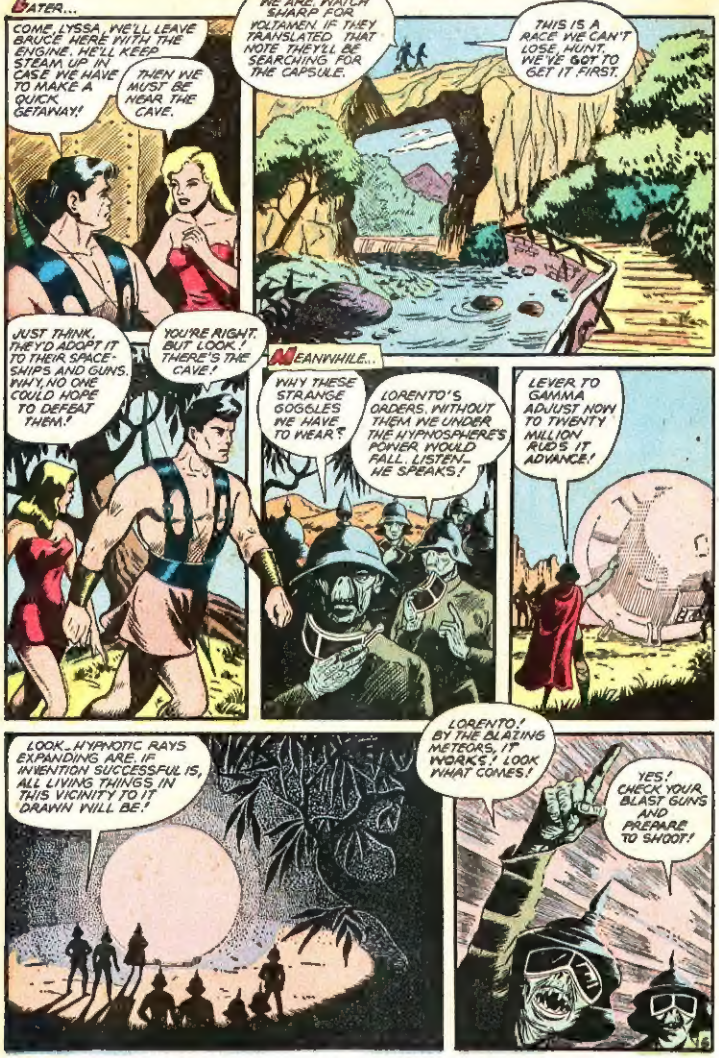
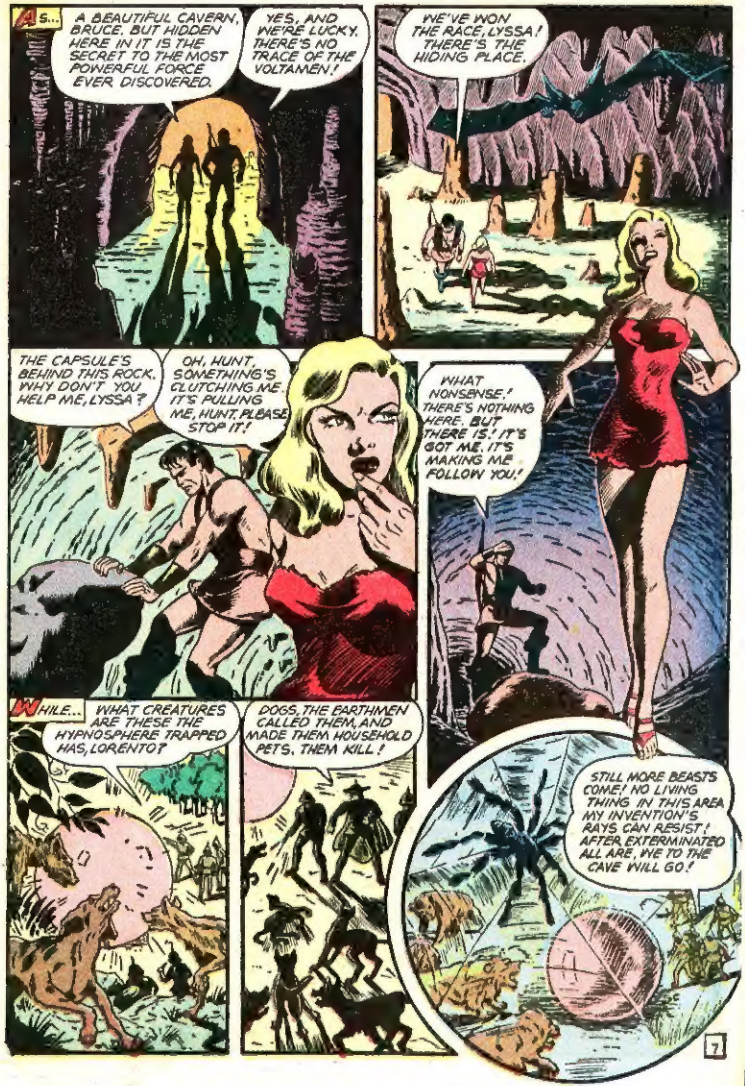
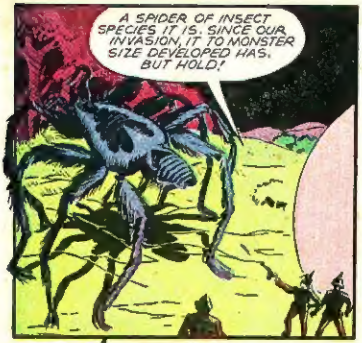

LATER...
COME, LYSSA, WE'LL LEAVE BRUCE HERE WITH THE ENGINE. HE'LL KEEP STEAM UP IN CASE WE HAVE TO MAKE A QUICK GETAWAY!
THEN WE MUST BE NEAR THE CAVE.
WE ARE WATCH SHARP FOR YOUTAMEN. IF THEY TRANSLATED THAT NOTE THEY'LL BE SEARCHING FOR THE CAPSULE.
THIS IS A RACE WE CAN'T LOSE, HUNT. WE'VE GOT TO GET IT FIRST.
JUST THINK, THEY'D ADOPT IT TO THEIR SPACE-SHIPS AND GUNS. WHY, NO ONE COULD HOPE TO DEFEAT THEM!
YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT LOOK! THERE'S THE CAVE!
MEANWHILE...
WHY THESE STRANGE GOGGLES WE HAVE TO WEAR?
LORENTO'S ORDERS. WITHOUT THEM WE UNDER THE HYPNOSPHERE'S POWER WOULD FALL. LISTEN— HE SPEAKS!
LEVER TO GAMMA ADJUST NOW TO TWENTY MILLION RUD'S IT ADVANCE!
LOOK—HYPNOTIC RAYS EXPANDING ARE. IF INVENTION SUCCESSFUL IS, ALL LIVING THINGS IN THIS VICINITY TO IT DRAWN WILL BE!
LORENTO! BY THE BLAZING METEORS, IT WORKS! LOOK WHAT COMES!
YES! CHECK YOUR BLAST GUNS AND PREPARE TO SHOOT!


AS...
A BEAUTIFUL CAVERN, BRUCE. BUT HIDDEN HERE IN IT IS THE SECRET TO THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE EVER DISCOVERED.
YES, AND WE'RE LUCKY. THERE'S NO TRACE OF THE VOLTAMEN!
WE'VE WON THE RACE, LYSSA! THERE'S THE HIDING PLACE.
THE CAPSULE'S BEHIND THIS ROCK. WHY DON'T YOU HELP ME, LYSSA?
OH, HUNT, SOMETHING'S CLUTCHING ME. IT'S PULLING ME, HUNT. PLEASE STOP IT!
WHAT NONSENSE.' THERE'S NOTHING HERE. BUT THERE IS.' IT'S GOT ME. IT'S MAKING ME FOLLOW YOU!
WHILE...
WHAT CREATURES ARE THESE THE HYPNOSPHERE TRAPPED HAS, LORENTO?
DOGS, THE EARTHMEN CALLED THEM, AND MADE THEM HOUSEHOLD PETS. THEM KILL!
STILL MORE BEASTS COME! NO LIVING THING IN THIS AREA MY INVENTION'S RAYS CAN RESIST.' AFTER EXTERMINATED ALL ARE, WE TO THE CAVE WILL GO!


A SPIDER OF INSECT SPECIES IT IS. SINCE OUR INVASION, IT TO MONSTER SIZE DEVELOPED HAS. BUT HOLD!

LORENTO! EARTHPEOPLE FROM THE WOODS COME! THEY AS IN A DREAM WALK. THE RAY THEM HAS TRAPPED!

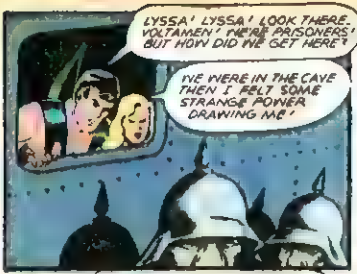
DISINTEGRATE THEM I WILL!

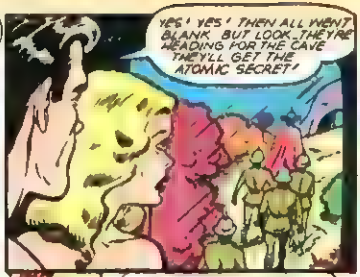
HOLD, FOOL. PRIZES THESE ARE. IN THE SPACESHIP THEM LOCK!

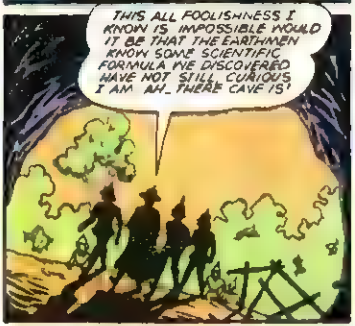
AH, THEY LIKE ROBOTS MARCH. THE RAY THEIR SENSES STUNNED. BUT SOON, LORENTO IT SHUT OFF WILL AND THEY TO NORMAL RETURN!

WHILE...
IT'S STRANGE THAT HUNT AND LYASA HAVEN'T RETURNED. THEY MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE AND NEED HELP. WHAT'S THIS? I FEEL A FORCE GRIPPING ME!

CAN'T STOP MYSELF! CAN'T EVEN THINK! MY MIND GOING BLANK. GHHH!


LYSSA! LYSSA! LOOK THERE. VOLTAMEN! THEY'RE PRISONERS! BUT HOW DID WE GET HERE?
WE WERE IN THE CAVE THEN I FELT SOME STRANGE POWER DRAWING ME!


YES! YES! THEN ALL WENT BLANK. BUT LOOK. THEY'RE HEADING FOR THE CAVE THEY'LL GET THE ATOMIC SECRET!


THIS ALL FOOLISHNESS I KNOW IS IMPOSSIBLE WOULD IT BE THAT THE EARTHMEN KNOW SOME SCIENTIFIC FORMULA WE DISCOVERED HAVE NOT STILL CURIOUS I AM AH. THERE CAVE IS!

WHILE
OH, MY HEAD. I FELL! BUT SOMETHING PULLED ME FORWARD. SOMETHING I COULDN'T RESIST PERHAPS IT CAUGHT HUNT AND LYSSA!

A VOLTA SHIP AND A GUARD! I'LL FIND OUT IF THEY'VE CAPTURED HUNT AND LYSSA!

HO, COMRADE. DOES LORENTO THINK HELP I NEED TO GUARD THESE PRISONERS?
NO BUT I A MESSAGE HAVE CLOSE. COME!

BRUCE! IT'S BRUCE! - HE'S COME TO SAVE US!

STAND BACK AND I'LL HAVE THIS LOCK BLASTED IN A SECOND. THERE, 'S OFF!
HUNT, ARE WE GOING TO STEAL THE SHIP?
NO! GET OFF! I'M GOING TO SAVE THE ATOMIC SECRET!
WHILE
VOLTA THIS EXPEDITION HONOR WILL! WITH TWO PRISONERS, A SUCCESSFUL REPORT ON HYPNOSPHERE OPERATION, AND THIS EARTHMEN'S SECRET FORMULA, WE RETURN WILL!
THERE STONE IS! IT REMOVE! BUT LISTEN, ROCKET SHIP TAKES OFF!
SOMETHING HAPPENING IS TO THE ENTRANCE HURRY!
HE'S GOING TO SMASH THE CAVE!
BUT HE'LL KILL HIMSELF! NO! NO! I CAN'T LOOK!
BUT
LOOK! IT AT US DIVES! RUN! RUN!
AND INSTANTLY, A THUNDEROUS CRASH
LATER
YOU BURIED THEM ALIVE HUNT BUT WITH THEM DIES THE ATOMIC SECRET!
YES, BUT NOT A LIVING EARTHMAN WOULD HAVE KNOWN HOW TO US USE IT COME WE MUST INVESTIGATE THEIR HYPNOSPHERE!

Futura

by JOHN DOUGLAS

A RAY-GUN BLASTED... A BODY CRASHED DOWN.. AND LORD MENTOR OF CYMRADIA PRANCED IN GLEE "KILLED HER!" HE CRIED "FUTURA IS DEAD - NOW ON WITH OUR GREAT WORK OF **PROJECT SURVIVAL!**"

BUT WHO IS THIS IN THE SHOCK-LAB WHERE MENTOR'S NEWEST SPECIMEN SHOULD BE DEEP IN COMA. WHY DO PALE LIPS WHISPER, "CAN'T ESCAPE - SOMETHING COMING"

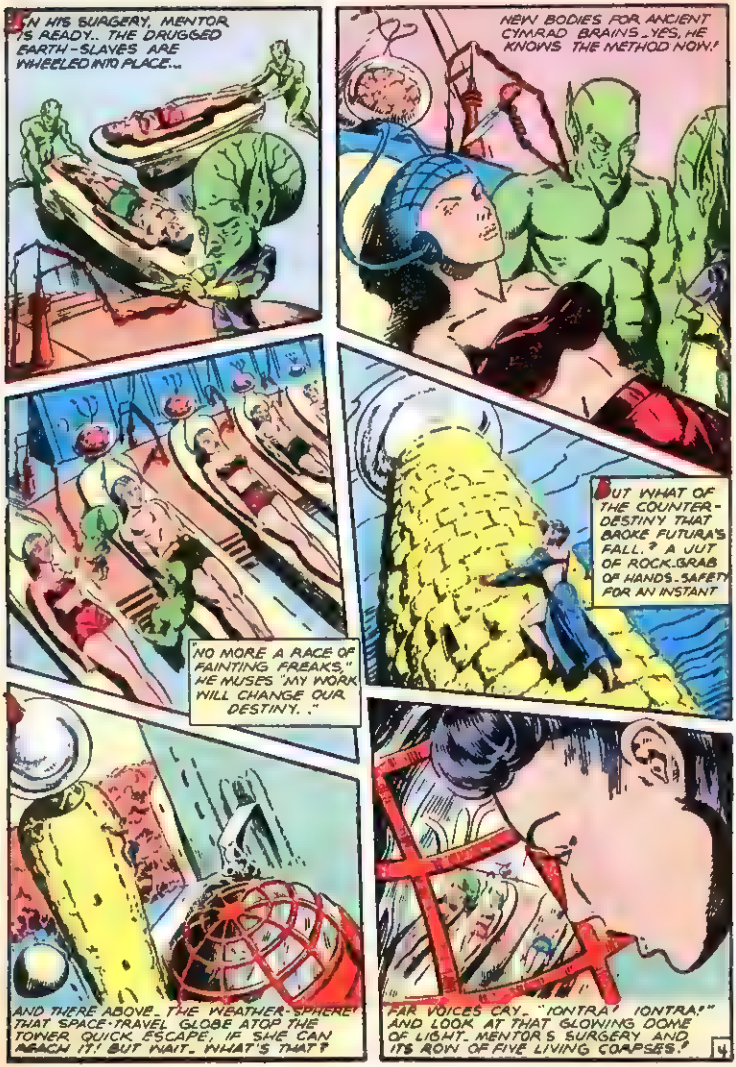
STIFFLY SHE POSES AS A GLIDE-SLED OOZES IN. DO THEY SUSPECT ? HAVE THE CLUMSY SYNTHOS COME TO SEIZE HER?

A CYMRAD VOICE SNARLS ORDERS: 'GENTLY, DOLTS! IONTRA'S BRAIN SLEEPS IN THAT BODY... TO THE GAMMA-BATHS FOR HER SPEEDIER AWAKENING!"

AND IN LIDDED EYES A DART OF FEAR..."THE GAMMA-BATHS. THIS HELMET STRIPPED... AND THEY WILL SEE THAT IONTRA DIED BY MENTOR'S GUN - THAT **I AM FUTURA!**"

MEANWHILE THE GREAT LORD MENTOR SMILES AT HIS WORK. HAH! ANOTHER OF 8-PLUS CAPACITY! SHOW THE FILM OF BRAIN 17-A!"
FILE A "LYDOR" SEVENTH INVITATION OF SOLAR CONGRESS HIGH DEGREES IN COSMOGRAPHY & ULTRASONICS FACTS QUOTED HERE IN ATTESTED BY BOARD OF REGENTS AS PER ORDINANCE G/9
WE WERE HORRIBLE BRUTES IN ERA THREE" PURRS MENTOR, BUT ON WITH HIS PLEA..."
IN CROAKING TONES THE SCREEN VOICE BEGS TO LIVE AGAIN. "I AM WISE, I AM ABLE, I RULED FIVE WORLDS."
WHO DUG THE SELEMITE MINES ON MARS? LYDOR! WHO PERFECTED THE VAXUM-RAY, AND LED THE EARTH-RAID OF 2023?"
ENOUGH!" CRIES MENTOR. I LIKE THIS OLD BRAGGART'S STYLE BRING HIS BRAIN TO THE SURGERY!"
THESE ARCHIVE SCENES OF THE GREAT CHICAGO ATTACK SHOW HOW I TOOK MY CAPTIVES. IF THEY HAD LIVED."

AND NOW ABOVE THE CITY SPIRES THE OX-5A FLIGHT OF WEATHER BIRDS RIDES IN ON THE HOMING BEAM
BUT IN THE CONTROL TOWER [illegible] CONNECTION WITH THE MAGNET [illegible] NO RESPONSE!
SPACE-TESTING METAL BIRDS GONE WILD... DANGER! LOOK OUT BELOW!"
QUICK FOOL. REVERSE KEYS. THAT GLIDE-SLED..THE RAMP..HOLY MISERY!"
LIKE A LIGHTNING SWORD THE FLYING ROBOT STRIKES.. THE ROCK RAMP BUCKLES WITH THE BLOW.
AND FUTURA'S FINGERS CLAW AT AIR AS DEATH'S CHASM YAWNS BENEATH HER.
3


IN HIS SURGERY, MENTOR IS READY.. THE DRUGGED EARTH-SLAVES ARE WHEELED INTO PLACE...
NEW BODIES FOR ANCIENT CYMRAD BRAINS - YES, HE KNOWS THE METHOD NOW!
"NO MORE A RACE OF FAINTING FREAKS," HE MUSES "MY WORK WILL CHANGE OUR DESTINY..."
BUT WHAT OF THE COUNTER-DESTINY THAT BROKE FUTURA'S FALL.? A JUT OF ROCK..GRAB OF HANDS..SAFETY FOR AN INSTANT
AND THERE ABOVE.. THE WEATHER-SPHERE! THAT SPACE-TRAVEL GLOBE ATOP THE TOWER QUICK, ESCAPE, IF SHE CAN REACH IT! BUT WAIT.. WHAT'S THAT?
FAR VOICES CRY.. "IONTRA! IONTRA!" AND LOOK AT THAT GLOWING DOME OF LIGHT.. MENTOR'S SURGERY AND ITS ROW OF FIVE LIVING CORPSES!
4

IN THE WEATHER-TOWER, NERVOUS HANDS SWITCH ON THE EMERGENCY BEAM FOR THE INBOUND FLIGHT FROM ARCTURUS. BUT WHAT IS THAT NOISE? WHO'S AT THE DOOR?
A STALKING FURY IN ON THEM. OUT OF MY WAY, YOU CYMRAD CURS!
I NEED YOUR WEATHER-BIRDS TO TAKE A MESSAGE TO LORD MENTOR!"
"GLOW, THE ELECTRO KNIVES GLOW GREEN. "CAMERAS ON!" CRIES MENTOR AS HE TESTS THE MASTER BLADE..
THE SOUND-TRACK PICKS UP HIS VOICE: "BRAIN-TRANSFER OPERATION. FIVE-IN-ONE TECHNIQUE. STOP! WHO CALLS?"
A QUAKING SYNTHO BABBLES THE NEWS: "IONTRA... GONE MAD... THE BIRD TOWER!"
5

FLIGHT-STREAKS ON THE VIEW-CHART... WEATHER-BIRDS BOUND HOME FROM THE METEOR BELTS, ROCKETING STRAIGHT AND TRUE... BUT SUDDENLY THEY VEER AND DIVE AS BEAM-CONTROLS WA-ER
SUDDENLY, THEY POWER-PLUNGE, BLIND WINGS OF DESTRUCTION, AT THE PLEXI-DOME OF THE SURGERY...
CRASH AND SHATTER, SLASH AND RIP! YOUR WORLD IS TOPPLING, MENTOR!
YOUR KNEES ARE JELLY. YOUR BRAIN IS AFIRE! RUN, MENTOR...RUN!
AND NOW ON THE VIZ-SCREEN IN THE TOWER, THE TURMOIL AND THE TERROR FADE...
INSTEAD A GASPING VOICE "CONTRA IS NOT CONTRA SIRE. SHE IS THE SLAVE YOU KILLED! SHALL I LOOSE THE ATO-BLASTERS ON HER?"

PLANET COMICS is a magazine of science fantasy and adventure. It is published bi-monthly by Fiction House Magazines, Inc., at 10 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y. Subscription price, $1.50 per year. Entered as second class matter at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1941, by Fiction House Magazines, Inc. All stories appearing in this publication are entirely fictitious and any resemblance which may appear to exist between characters herein and persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. Printed in U. S. A.

Dear Sirs:

Your theory on the possibility of Earth once being a colony of Venus is all very interesting, but has one serious flaw. When the Venusians colonists transplanted their supposedly well-developed brain into an anthropoid ape, the author assumed that the offspring of the biped would have large brains too. This is one of the chief fallacies of pseudo-evolutionists, for it is a fundamental principle that acquired characteristics do not reappear in the offspring. For example, if you cut the tails off two rats and mate them, the offspring will still have tails.

Also, it is not unusual for man and apes, both belonging to the same family, to be so different . . . the domesticated housecat and the man-eating tigers of Bengal are of the same family, and there is certainly a world of difference between them.

I don't see why so much comment is aroused by the Voltamen of Lost World as to their language. It is sublimely obvious to anyone study ng Latin that their slang is nothing more than Latin translated into English, but kept in the same form with the verb at the end and the other parts of the sentence placed accordingly. To add to this almost direct Latin derivatives, such as Vi dee diction, etc. are to be found in the Latin lingua.

William Maye
Detroit, Michigan

Dear Mr. Maye:

The article does not claim that the immediate offspring of the apes with transplanted brains alone had the identical brains of their parents. It states that this branch of the ape family was the one from which present day man evolved. Children born of apes with highly developed brains would have a markedly different environment from ordinary ape children. Their entire training and education at the hands of such creatures would cause them tremendously superior animals at adulthood. Such a headstart toward civilizat on was g van the type of ape used by the colonists from Venus and thus he evolved through millions of years into modern man. The process was not instantaneous.

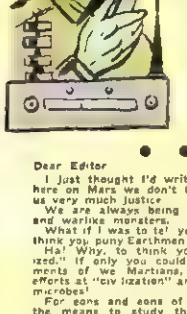
Sincerely,
H. McLeod Kensington, Ph.D.

Dear Mr. Editor:

I have a complaint. You are letting the magazine get into a rut. I like Viennese waltzes, but even they can become tiresome. Seems as though a person must be a literary specialist to enter a contest into the Vizigraph, as well as a phrenic complainer. Why don't you have some new blood, or have these fellows rented the space?

We, the ORDINARY fans, don't hold with these few opinionated few-makers. Wasn't the mag primarily and originally Imag native? Then why all the demand for precision? It is my recommendation that you gaclly the few grenouches. You have our real support of the magazine. I think the art work is of the best.

Beaufard R. Whitten
San Francisco, Calif.



ATTENTION!
VIDEO MESSAGE TO EDITOR OF PLANET COMICS

Dear Sir:

Orch de to Futura give! Also plenty good Last World is! Pretty good are the rest, except (Ugh!) Mysta. Her throw out! What has happened to Mars? Very good he always was. Why does not the girl (Space Rangers, No 46) from lack of oxygen die? A oxo he met she has not! Is Star Pirate a Voltaman? He that way sounds when says he, 'Boy Patrol Scouts.' It should be, "Boy Scout Patrols. Your excellent magazine keep us!"

Pete Leach
Fort Atkinson Wisconsin

S.P. O.K is the way the Ve tamen talk!

Dear Editor

I just thought I'd write and let you know that here on Mars we don't think your magazine does us very much justice.

We are always being depicted as brainy, cruel and warlike monsters.

What if I was to tell you that we Martians don't think you puny Earthmen are such hot stuff either?

Ha! Why, to think you call yourselves "civilized." If only you could gaze upon the achievements of we Martians, you'd realize that your efforts at "civilization" are only the efforts of mere microbes!

For eons and eons of time now, we have had the means to study the every move, methods, achievements, etc. of our sister planets, and why you think we would waste our time in taking possession of your "wonderful" Earth in its present condition, I don't know. Unless it was to teach your poor Earthmen a thing or two. Yes, because of your Earth-policy of belittling the Martians—(we're really not a bad sort, you know.) However, if this policy is continued much longer, even we peace-loving Martians are going to be incited into giving you Earthmen a real taste of a Martian invasion! SO DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU.

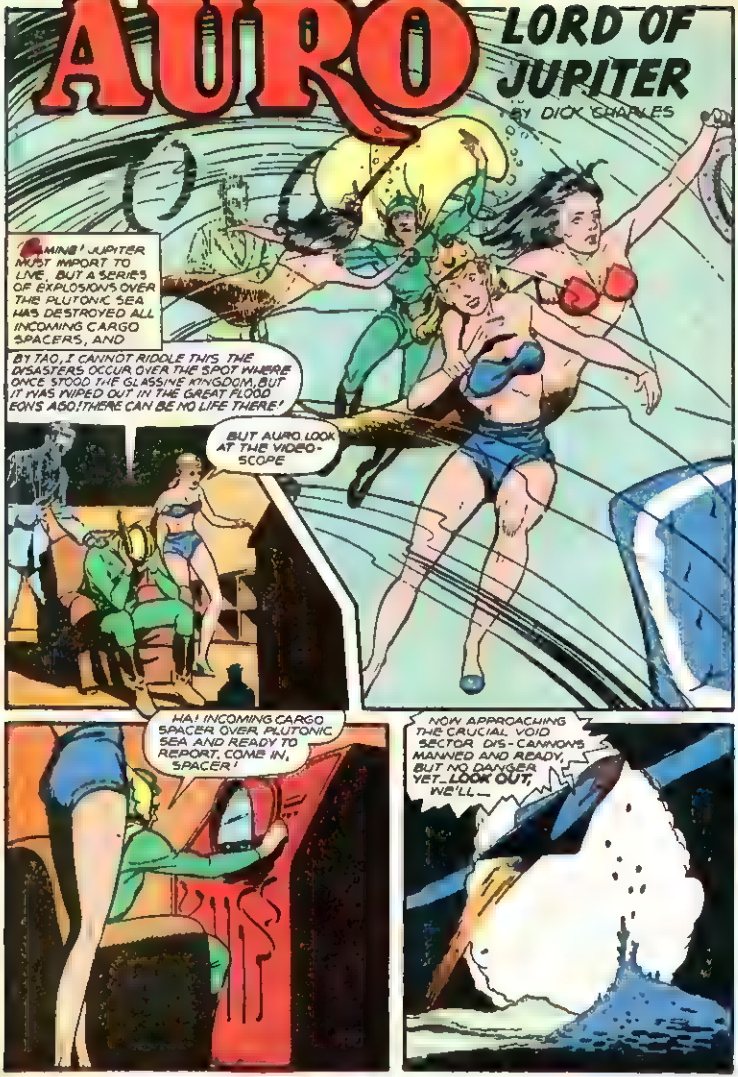
Signing Off
A Dissatisfied Martian

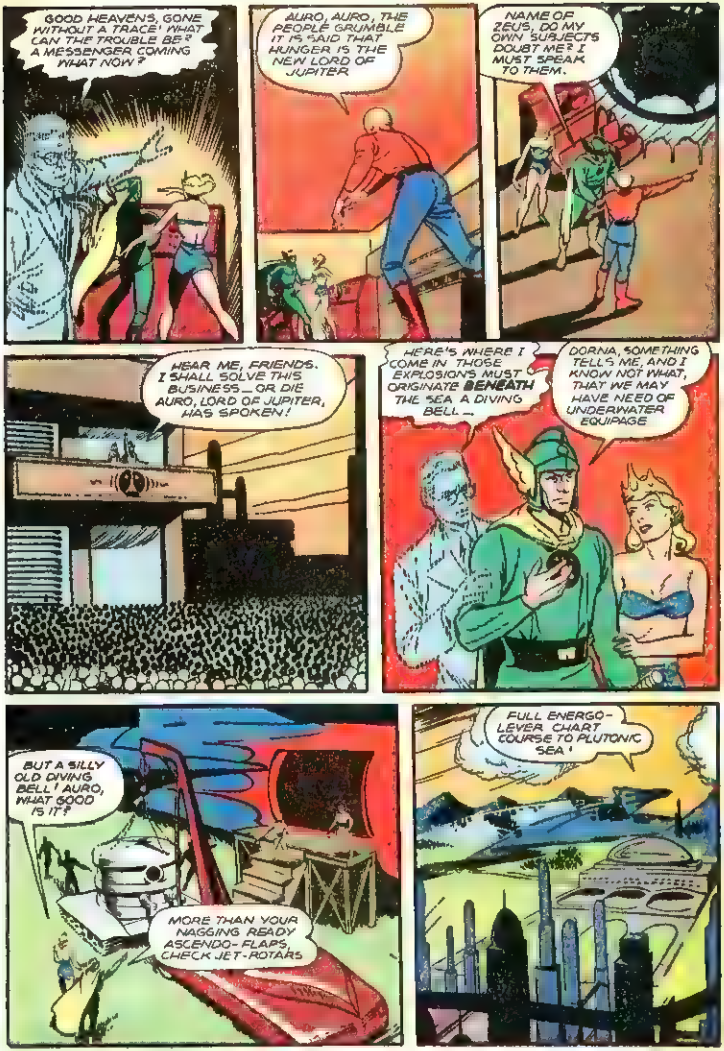
Dear Sir:

In regard to your magazine, PLANET Comics, I enjoy this magazine more than any other. However, I would like to express my thoughts about one character in this parade, namely Chet Edson. Aure's spirit. He gives me a pain in the sacroiliac—he's always pulling his hair, or else he is afraid of a little something. I ask you, is that natural for a full fledged spirit?

I think that Dick Charles is a good writer, but surely he himself can see where he made a mistake in inventing Chet.

Susan Brand
Evansville, Indiana

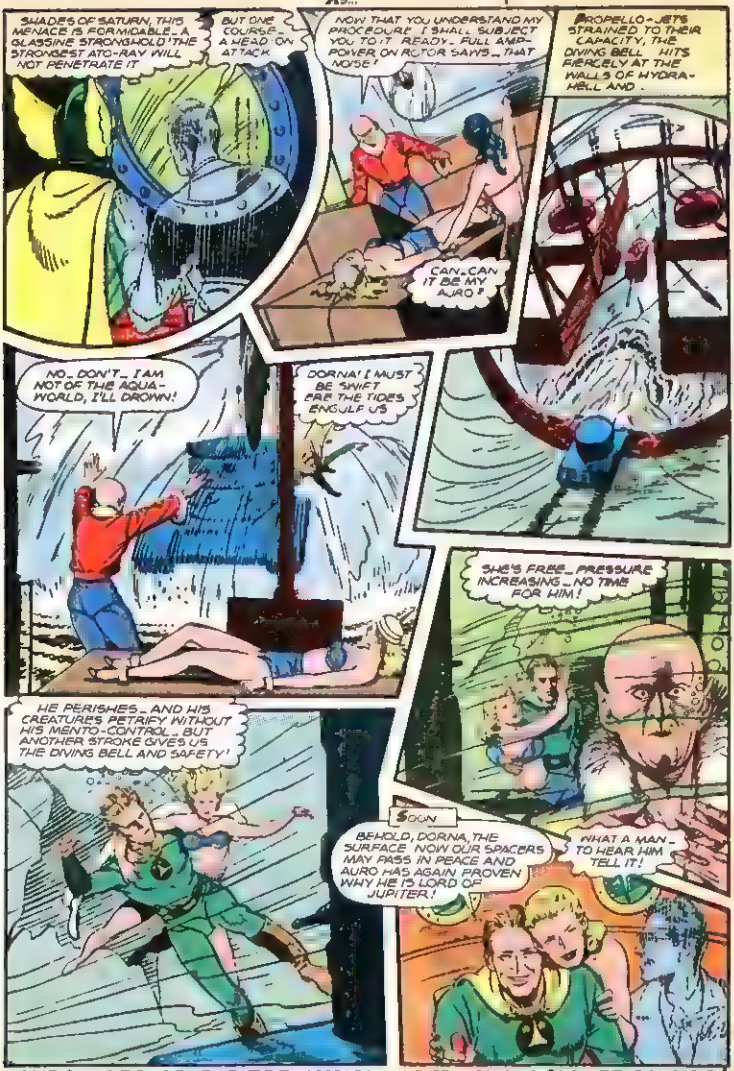

AURO
LORD OF JUPITER
BY DICK CHARLES
MMM! JUPITER MUST IMPORT TO LIVE. BUT A SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS OVER THE PLUTONIC SEA HAS DESTROYED ALL INCOMING CARGO SPACERS, AND
BY TAO, I CANNOT RIDDLE THIS. THE DISASTERS OCCUR OVER THE SPOT WHERE ONCE STOOD THE GLASSINE KINGDOM, BUT IT WAS WIPED OUT IN THE GREAT FLOOD EONS AGO! THERE CAN BE NO LIFE THERE!
BUT AURO LOOK AT THE VIDEO-SCOPE
HA! INCOMING CARGO SPACER OVER PLUTONIC SEA AND READY TO REPORT. COME IN, SPACER!
NOW APPROACHING THE CRUCIAL VOID SECTOR. GYS - CANNONS MANNED AND READY, BUT NO DANGER YET. LOOK OUT, WE'LL —


GOOD HEAVENS, GONE WITHOUT A TRACE! WHAT CAN THE TROUBLE BE? A MESSENGER COMING WHAT NOW?
AURO, AURO, THE PEOPLE GRUMBLE IT IS SAID THAT HUNGER IS THE NEW LORD OF JUPITER
NAME OF ZEUS, DO MY OWN SUBJECTS DOUBT ME? I MUST SPEAK TO THEM.
HEAR ME, FRIENDS. I SHALL SOLVE THIS BUSINESS — OR DIE AURO, LORD OF JUPITER, HAS SPOKEN!
HERE'S WHERE I COME IN THOSE EXPLOSIONS MUST ORIGINATE BENEATH THE SEA A DIVING BELL —
DORNA, SOMETHING TELLS ME, AND I KNOW NOT WHAT, THAT WE MAY HAVE NEED OF UNDERWATER EQUIPAGE
BUT A SILLY OLD DIVING BELL! AURO, WHAT GOOD IS IT?
MORE THAN YOUR NAGGING READY ASCENDO-FLAPS, CHECK JET-ROTARS
FULL ENERGO-LEVER CHART COURSE TO PLUTONIC SEA!

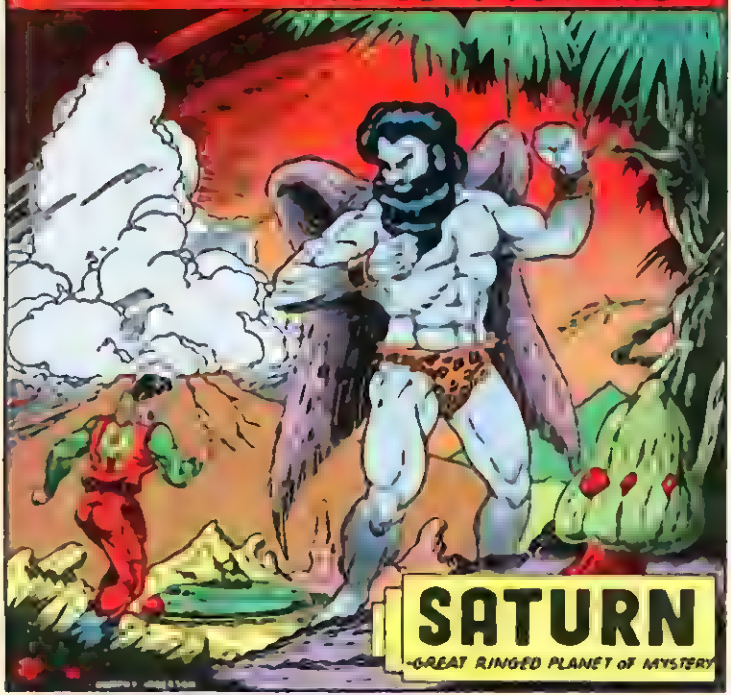
AS THE GALLANT JUPITERIANS SPEED FORWARD, THE ONCE ABANDONED GLASSINE KINGDOM HUMS WITH HIDEOUS ACTIVITY
NO! ANOTHER SPACER SEEKS THE ANSWER TO MY PLOT AGAINST JUPITER! FOOLS! ONLY I REALIZED THAT THIS ANCIENT CITY COULD BE USED TO CAPTURE JUPITER THROUGH STARVATION. ONLY I KNEW HOW TO CREATE THESE CREATURES!
DEPART THROUGH YOUR AQUA VENT AS USUAL, BRING ONLY FEMALE CAPTIVES
LITHE HALF-CREATURES TRAINED TO OBEDIENCE AND MURDER — SWIFTLY DEPART HYDRA-HELL ON THEIR ERRAND OF CARNAGE
AS ABOVE
NOTHING SO FAR. I KNOW THE BLASTS ARE FROM BELOW, BUT HOW OR WHAT?
GREAT SCOTT! THAT COLUMN OF WATER I SEE NOW — A HYDRA-GUN!
GURNA, WE BE HIT! WATER BURNING US DOWN INTO THE SEA
3

BY TAO! WE'RE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PLUTONIC SEA — AND THESE CREATURES..
QUICKLY, DOLT! SHUT ALL BORESSO-VENTS!
YES, AURO, I— TOO LATE— AAAGH!
NAME OF ZEUS, THEY SWARM ALL OVER US! ATO-GUNS USELESS UNDERWATER— AND NOW DORNA SEIZED
THERE IS BUT ONE ANSWER TO THIS HORROR— STEEL, COLD STEEL
COURAGE, DORNA!— OOH!
GOOD HEAVENS! IS THIS THE END OF AURO, LORD OF JUPITER?
4

SWIFT SECONDS LATER, A CAPTIVE DORNA IS LED INTO THE GLASSINE CHAMBERS OF THE KING OF HYDRA-HELL
A SPLENDID SUBJECT! TO THE ROTAR CHAMBERS QUICKLY!
NEITHER MY PETS NOR I BELONG BENEATH THE SEA, BUT THE ENERGO CAP GIVES ME MENTO-CONTROL OF THEM
WHILE THE AMPUTO-SAW REMOVES THEIR USELESS LEGS, LATER I ADD FINS AND AQUA-LUNGS TO ENABLE THEM TO LIVE OUT IN THE WATER
I, OF COURSE, CANNOT LEAVE HERE OR I'D DROWN BUT ENOUGH TALK. IT SHALL SOON BE YOUR TURN
As
HE'S MOVING AND THE AUTO-MATIC EJECTO VALVES HAVE PUMPED OUT THE WATER
BY TAO! IT WAS MERE SHOCK THAT FELLED ME THE KNIFE ONLY PIERCED MY CHEST MEDALLION
AND DORNA CAN YET BE SAVED - THIS DIVING BELL AND A STOUT HEART -


SHADES OF SATURN, THIS MENACE IS FORMIDABLE - A GLASSINE STRONGHOLD! THE STRONGEST ATO-RAY WILL NOT PENETRATE IT
BUT ONE COURSE - A HEAD ON ATTACK
NOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND MY PROCEDURE, I SHALL SUBJECT YOU TO IT. READY - FULL AMP-POWER ON ROTOR SAYS... THAT NOISE!
CAN - CAN IT BE MY AURO!
PROPELLO-JETS STRAINED TO THEIR CAPACITY, THE DIVING BELL HITS FIERCELY AT THE WALLS OF HYDRA-HELL AND.
NO - DON'T - I AM NOT OF THE AQUA-WORLD, I'LL DROWN!
DORNA! I MUST BE SWIFT ERE THE TIDES ENGULF US
SHE'S FREE - PRESSURE INCREASING - NO TIME FOR HIM!
HE PERISHES - AND HIS CREATURES PETRIFY WITHOUT HIS MENTO-CONTROL - BUT ANOTHER STROKE GIVES US THE DIVING BELL AND SAFETY!
SOON
BEHOLD, DORNA, THE SURFACE. NOW OUR SPACERS MAY PASS IN PEACE AND AURO HAS AGAIN PROVEN WHY HE IS LORD OF JUPITER!
WHAT A MAN - TO WEAR HIM TELL IT!

Life on other Worlds



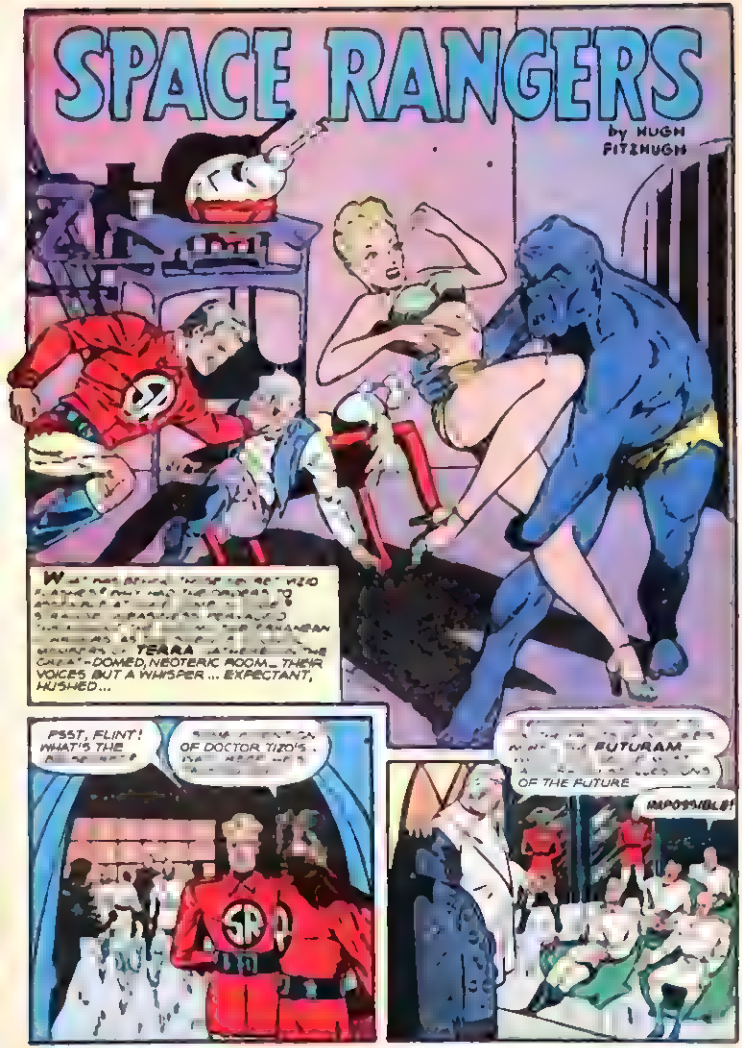
SATURN [illegible] AND IS 885,900 MILES FROM THE SUN. ALTHOUGH ITS DIAMETER AT THE EQUATOR IS 75,000 MILES, THE SPEED OF ROTATION IS SO GREAT THAT THE DAYS ARE ONLY 10½ HOURS LONG. ONE SATURN YEAR EQUALS 29½ EARTH YEARS. WHILE THIS PLANET HAS A VOLUME 750 TIMES THAT OF EARTH, IT EXCEEDS EARTH ONLY 95 TIMES IN MASS. SATURN'S MEAN DENSITY IS SEVEN-TENTHS THAT OF WATER.

[illegible] SATURN BECAUSE OF ITS GREAT RINGS. THESE ARE THOUGHT TO BE THE RESULT OF METEORIC DUST AND GASEOUS MATTER. SATURN HAS NINE MOONS; THE NINTH, PHOEBE, IS UNIQUE IN THAT IT REVOLVES ABOUT SATURN IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF ITS SISTER MOONS.

SATURN IS TORN BY EARTHQUAKES AND VOLCANOES. THE SPEED OF ROTATION, AND SLIGHT DENSITY HAS KEPT THE PLANET TEMPERATE. CONTINENTS OF LARGE SIZE DON'T
AT THE POLES, WIND STORMS OF CYC FURY BUFFET THE SPACESHIP. THESE ARE CAUSED BY THE EXTREME SPEED OF ROTATION.
PLANET IS YOU KNOW AS SATURN!

SPACE RANGERS

by HUGH FITZHUGH



IMPOSSIBLE? WILL THE GENTLEMAN WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE POSE A LOGICAL QUESTION IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE?
CERTAINLY! WHEN WILL GALAXY X-172 DISINTEGRATE?
A STEADY ELECTRO HUM, AND.
RADI-DIAL SET, CALCO-KNOB AT 2 CYCLE NOW, MEMBERS, LISTEN TO THE ANSWER ON THE VOCODER!
(CLICK... BUZZZ....) I-N T-W-O T-H-O-U-S-A-N-D A-N-N-O-S (CLICK)
GENTLEMEN!
AMAZING! AN ANSWER IN TEN SEKOS..THAT TAKES HUMANS TEN ANNOS TO ARRIVE AT!
FLINT! THIS IS A MIRACLE NOW THEY'LL BE ABLE TO PREDICT ASTRO COLLISIONS AND
COSMIC UPHEAVALS YEAH, BUT IF IT SHOULD FALL INTO EVIL HANDS..!
AT THAT MOMENT IN A SUB-TERRA LAB
AT LAST! AT LAST! I HAVE THE CORRECT FORMULA! BRING AN EXPERIMO-BODY, QUICKLY, YARRO!
HAH! FOOLS OF THE SCIENCE COUNCIL! KICK ME OUT, WILL THEY?
NEURO-RATE AT POINT NORM..A HEALTHY SPECIMEN! AN INJECTION OF ATO-I2SO ANIMAL BLOOD. AND WATCH..WATCH!
FOR AN INSTANT..SILENCE, THEN SLOWLY THE FAMILIAR FEATURES CHANGE, AND
A THING OF HORROR, IS IT NOT? AND I HEREBY CHRISTEN IT..SUB-HUMANOID! YARRO! KEEP YOUR PARA-BEAM ON HIM OR ELSE HE'LL KILL..KILL!

TAKE IT TO THE FORCE-CELL BRING ME MORE BODIES.. HURRY, HURRY! WE'RE GOING TO SEIZE MY BROTHER'S FUTURAM!
YES, PROFESSOR ZANDO. GET ALONG, YOU!
As DOCTOR ZERO'S A BIG SHOT NOW, EH FLINT? BUT SAY, DIDN'T HE HAVE A BROTHER WHO..
YEAH! WAS EXPELLED FOR ILLEGAL EXPERIMENTS WITH ANI-BLOOD GOT TO RUN, REEF. THE VICEROY'S GIVING ME THE NOD
BAKER, YOU KNOW THE VALUE OF THIS FUTURAM. SO, I'M ASSIGNING YOU TO GUARD IT.. WITH YOUR LIFE.. IF NECESSARY
YES SIR! NO ONE WILL GET NEAR IT!
BUT AS SHADOWS LENGTHEN IN THE GLOOMY CORRIDORS..
QUIET AS A SUNDAY MORN.
THERE'S THE FUTURAM AND IT'S GUARD, SNAP OFF THE PARA-BEAM, YARRO!
A SUDDEN GUTTURAL GRUNT, AND
KILL! KILL!
WHAT TH..! MY BLASTER..
BRR! WHAT A MESS! BUT WAIT.. THOSE OTHERS GRABBING THE FUTURAM... BEHIND ME!
ALMOST GOT ME! THERE! TAKE IT! TAKE IT!
HURRY.. THAT GUARD'LL BE FREE IN A MOMENT. CONSIDERATE OF MY BROTHER TO CONSTRUCT THE FUTURAM OF LIGHT ALO-METAL OUTSIDE, QUICKLY!
3

SWIFT SECONDS LATER IN THE VICEROY'S OFFICE
MY FUTURAM GONE! OOH!
YES SOME WILD-EYED CHARACTER WITH A BAND OF SUB-HUMANS!
GREAT COSMOS, BAKER- THIS IS TERRIBLE! A BLACK SPACESHIP WAS JUST REPORTED BLASTING OFF WITHOUT CLEARANCE
BLACK SPACESHIP! THEN I KNOW WHO'S BEHIND THIS! PROFESSOR ZANDO... MY BROTHER I HAVE AN INVENTION THAT CAN PICK UP ANY SPACER'S TRAIL...
GOOD! I'LL VIZIO THE HANGER AND TELL THEM TO WARM UP MY PATROL SHIP!
SOON
COME ON, SLOW POKES! WHAT'S KEEPIN' YA?
HERC AND MARY - WAITING! WARM THE JET TUBES, LAD, HURRY!
AND WITH A BLASTING ROAR.
PULSOS OKAY- ALTI-BEAM STEADY. FUEL THE FORWARD BANK, HERC! NOW ABOUT THAT INVENTION, DOC...?
YES! THIS JET-DUST TRACER. LOOK, THE HAND MOVES WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK!
AS AHEAD
PROFESSOR ZANDO! THE VIZI-SCOPE SHOWS A 'SPACE PATROL SHIP' FOLLOWING CLOSE!
REALLY? AND WE'RE BUT A FEW PAR-KILO'S FROM MY ASTEROID. LET THEM INTO OUR TRACTO-RAY AURA, YARRO!
AH, LEAVE IT TO ZANDO! LET'S SEE KF TEKUL'S ALTERNATE 48- RANGE 9000, DEFLECTION 064 - THERE THAT DOES IT. WE'LL PULL 'EM RIGHT INTO THE ASTEROID WITH US!
FLINT! WE'RE BEING DRAGGED ONTO THAT ASTEROID RIGHT BEHIND 'EM!
PRETTY CLEVER! A TRACTO-RAY HERE THEY COME FOR US - MY BLASTER WHAT? WON'T WORK - EXPENDED!

SWIFTLY, EFFICIENTLY, THE VICIOUS PROFESSOR ZANDO AND HIS MEN COVER FLINT, MARY AND DOCTOR TIZO — BUT WATCHING
HOLY CATS! LUCKY I JUMPED INTO THAT JET TUBE .. BUT WHAT NOW?
ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY INSIDE! YARRO, BRING IN THE FUTURAM.
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS, ZANDO
SHUT UP! I'LL GIVE THE ORDERS. BRING ONE OF MY PETS, YARRO.
RANGER, MEET MY CREATION! BUT YOU SHALL WATCH HIM IN ACTION! YARRO, ANOTHER ONE, QUICKLY!
THEN I SNAP OFF THIS PARA-RAY .. HAH!
A QUICK SCUFFLE, THEN A BLUR OF CLASHING BEASTS, WITH VICIOUS SNARLS AND GUTTURAL GRUNTS
SOON, AS EXHAUSTION SLOWS THEM
TAKE 'EM AWAY, AND BRING ME THE GIRL. MY EXPERIMENTS HAVEN'T INCLUDED FEMALES YET.. BUT THEY SHALL, NOW!
MARY! GOOD HEAVENS, HE'S A FIEND! MAYBE IF I STALL HIM...
ZANDO! WHERE DO YOU THINK ALL THIS WILL END? WHY NOT CONSULT THE FUTURAM — AND LEARN YOUR ULTIMATE FATE?
WHAT CAN I LOSE?
THERE! DIALS'RE SET. I ASKED WHAT WOULD BE THE OUTCOME OF MY EXPERIMENTS. WELL, ANSWER — ANSWER!
(CLICK! BUZZ) C-R-E-A-T-O-R-S O-F E-V-I-L D-I-E A-T T-H-E H-A-N-D-S O-F T-H-E-I-R C-R-E-A-T-I-O-N-S! (CLICK!)

SUDDENLY..
BUNK! GRAB THE GAL! OUR EXPERIMENT WILL CONTINUE!
HELP, FLINT! OOH!
BUNK HE SAYS! GOT TO FREE FLINT NOW WHILE THE EXCITEMENT IS ON!
COME ALONG, EXPERIMENT WOMAN!
THERE! NOW BACK TO TERRA, AND A TRIAL FOR YOU.
WHAT! LOOSE! YARRO! HELP.. RELEASE THE SUB-HUMANOIDS
FREE THE DOC, HERAC! NOW, ZARDO IT'S TIME UNCLE FLINT DID SOME EXPERIMENTING ON YOUR CHIN!
HEY! HE'S FALLING INTO THE HUMANOID PEN! TOO LATE TO SAVE HIM!
OKAY, DOC.. LET'S GATHER UP THE FUTURAM AND SCRAM!
NO NO! I'M YOUR MASTER, YOUR CREATOR, WITHOUT ME YOU CANNOT EXIST IN THIS ATMOSPHERE! HELP! AAHH!
THE SPACE SHIP. HURRY! C'MON, MARY!
LATER
YOU CALLED THE PITCH TO A 'T', KADDO. LUCKY FOR US YOU HOPPED INTO THE FUTURAM GADGET BEFORE THEY BROUGHT IT IN
OH, MY! FOR A MOMENT I WAS WORRIED FUTURAM ANSWERS ONLY MATHEMATICAL QUESTIONS

SPACE RANGERS IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

SHROUDS FROM THE DEATH-CRYPTS

By MONTAGUE TRUEX, Ph. D.

DOCTOR PAUL GREGORY, Chief of the Universal Science Council, straightened slowly, uttered a long sigh as he glanced wearily at his assistant, Professor Danton. "I concede failure, Danton," his low voice cracked. "There is no possible restoration of dead tissue back to life."

Danton's swift-darting eyes swept triumphantly over the wan, hawk-like visage of Gregory. "I told you that before you started your experiments. Even though this is the year 2432, resuscitation of dead bodies is utterly impossible!"

They were standing alongside the marble-topped experiment table in the Council's laboratory, upon which stood various micro-plates, test tubes filled with Zadox and a huge, well-used atomoscope. Behind the men gigantic crystobulbs flickered monotonously with weird blue flashes as white-coated attendants flitted about in the eerie glow.

A clerk from the outer office padded swiftly up to Doctor Gregory and said: "Sir, there's a man outside who wishes to speak to you. He—he acts strangely . . .!"

Professor Danton smiled knowingly, brows raised. "Another crackpot's impossible phantasy, who wishes his absurd testimony to be recorded in our scientific archives." He turned to the clerk. "Tell him we're not interested . . ."

"Wait!" Doctor Gregory interposed. "I will see him." He turned on his heel and strode rapidly into the office—the smirking Danton following, reluctantly.

Gregory seated himself at the modernistic desk, told the clerk: "Show this strange gentleman in."

Danton waited at the far crystite window. Long had he craved Gregory's important position, and if Gregory kept listening—on Council's time—to these crackpot yarns . . . the job would soon be his.

A quiet unassuming man entered the office then, and Doctor Gregory waved him to a seat alongside his desk. "You wished to see me?"

"Y—yes . . . but I—I hardly know how to begin . . ." the man started. Gregory noticed a queer sheen in the man's deep-socketed eyes which reflected from the tubes of cold light above. He continued then: "I'd like this to be recorded in your scientific archives . . ."

Gregory smiled assuringly. "These whole proceedings are even now being recorded on the tele-viz."

By the window, a smile played around Danton's mouth.

The man went on, "I only ask the courtesy of no interruptions . . ." An odd sounding laugh issued from his mouth and his eyes held the queer glow. "Time is short—"

He began:

My name is Bruce Hayward. Three years ago, my wife died. I had her entombed in the underground crypts, where they place the bodies under a huge crysto-bell—which preserves them in natural state for eternity.

For a full year I visited my wife in those eerie crypts. Believe me, gentlemen, all of her natural attributes had been miraculously preserved. She was more beautiful in death—than in life!

But one evening I visited her bell . . . It was near to closing time. There was a sinister air pervading the incense-filled hall that evening. I could feel it, hear it with every hollow beat of my footsteps on the marble floor slabs.

Standing before my wife's bell, I must have lost myself in reverie—for just then I was rudely awakened by the loud slamming of the outer bronzite door and the babbling of strange, high-pitched voices. Instantly, there was a terrible Z-Z-A-A-A-P-P-P! and I knew one of the crypt guards had been put to death by a heat ray. There was another. Then another!

Quickly, fearfully, I slunk behind an ancient cremation slab; waited, silent in the clammy dampness. The cold light tubes above suddenly flickered out. But fingers of light splayed in from an open door somewhere, enabling me to catch the movement of swift-darting shadows.

The intruders brazenly entered the crypt where I was hiding. Four of them. The leader was motioning with his scaly hands, and his cruel, thin lips were bubbling with hurried orders. He wore a repulso helmet; his one ugly eye bulged grotesquely like a lizard's, and his long scaly fingers clutched a dis-gun. The other three cradled long dis-rifles in their scale-glittering arms.

I stifled the urge to scream when I saw what they were about . . . going to each bell, sliding out the bodies, and slinging them

rougly into a small-wheeled car. The scream bubbled up to my lips when I saw them lift my wife's bell and sling her stiff form onto the already high-piled car. Viciously, I bit my tongue, stifled the scream, and clenched my hands into tight balls of hate and fury. What cursed evil was this?

I watched from my cramped hiding place as they went over the entire crypt, piling bodies onto the car. Soon they pushed the car down a long corridor—one I'd never seen before. At the end, a panel slid up easily, and the ghouls shoved the loaded car through. Cautiously, I followed, and just as I got inside the door—it slammed shut!

I was trapped!

They must have heard me enter, for immediately I could hear feet pounding back towards me. I whirled, scrambled for the door, clawed at that metal portal, flung myself at it headlong. It hurled me back. I slumped to the cold stone-flagged floor, sat there panting. The pounding of feet got closer . . . closer! Terror struck in my swift-beating heart, paralyzed me; I couldn't move!

The ugly creatures thundered up. Dimly, I heard one of them issue a muffled order: "Blank him out!"

A ray gun cut the gloom with a knife-like beam. I felt the searing ray tingle through my body like a gentle electric shock. Then—unconsciousness.

When I finally came to, I felt strange. A constant tingling from head to toe. My vision was a shimmery thing of dancing waves. Miasmatic effluvium swirled up to my nostrils. My head reeled sickeningly.

I was standing outside a queer looking laboratory. There were two doors, one at each end. Scaly creatures stood at one door and were pushing dead bodies into the lab. Inside, I could hear the low buzz of steady electric current. Then, with horror, I saw what was coming out the other door.

Dead bodies were walking out!

The hideous things seemed to float—staring, sightless, dumb! I saw Lily, my wife, emerge . . . and her body brushed gently against me. My frantic fingers grasped her arm. "Lily! Lily!" I hissed. I held her tightly, lest she drift away. She didn't answer.

Voices were babbling inside the lab. "Quickly, our time is short! Hah! What a surprise the Universe will get when we attack with our army of the dead! Our electro-energy ray is a success. Allow no one to reach that de-energizer ray on the balcony . . ."

The de-energizer! If it was what I thought it was—

Swiftly, I grabbed Lily's arm and dragged her floating body up a web-like ladder. On the balcony I ran to something resembling an ancient cannon. I located the switches, and pressed one. A long beam of white light fanned out below. The gruesome army of dead had assumed vast proportions by now. The evil stench was smothering. These scaly fiends must have been collecting dead bodies for many, many annos.

The one-eyed monsters came boiling out of the lab now. They'd spotted the beam . . . and were pointing scaly fingers at me. "Get him!" they shrieked.

Quickly, I played the beam on the horrid, squirming bodies below. They were alive—for they moved under their own power. Caught in the beam, they shrunk, decomposed before my eyes!

The scaly things tried to scramble up the ladder, but I sprayed them viciously with the beam. They wilted like figures of wax . . . all the energy sapped from their horrid, writhing bodies. And they died with long loud hisses.

When it was all over below, I turned sadly to Lily. I didn't want to do it, but I had to. Had to! Her eyes had opened, she stared at me blankly.

I twisted the beam, and it caught her as she was floating away. The thing trembled for an instant . . . then slowly shrunk, and wasted to a rotting skeleton.

The story teller slumped, let out a sigh. "For two years I tried to get out of those crypts. Someone must hear this story . . . before . . . before . . ." His voice ended in a hiss.

Gregory rose, gaunt faced. "You have proof?"

Danton padded over, exploded: "Of all the damnable lies! Surely . . ."

"Quiet!" Gregory clipped. "LOOK! What in the name . . ."

Both stumbled crazily over to the man's chair, stared horrified.

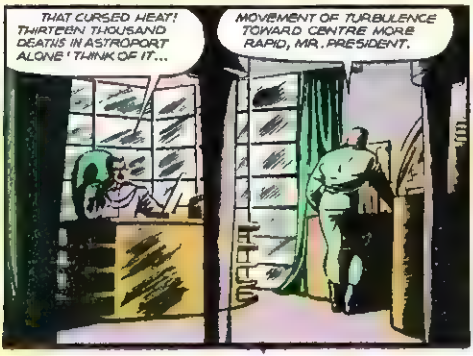
He was slumped, his skin was dead yellow and shriveling before their very eyes! Where his own eyes had been were now deep hollow empty pits of blackness. His mouth was distorted into a horrible gash, the lips rotted. Whitened finger-bones gripped the chair arms.

"Proof, Danton!" Gregory croaked finally. "Those scaly things killed him, and put him under the energy ray!". His clear gray eyes swept triumphantly over Danton's crestfallen face, and he spaced his words carefully, deliberately: "This man has been DEAD FOR TWO YEARS!"

MYSTA of the moon

By ROSS GALLUN

PROBING FAR BENEATH THE GLOBE'S SURFACE, SCIENTISTS OF ENERGO, LTD. SOUGHT TO HARNESS THE FLAME COLUMN OF EARTH'S CORE. BUT, FEARING THE SPHERE MIGHT BE THROWN FROM ITS ORBIT, THE COUNCIL HAD HALTED THEIR EXPERIMENT WEEKS PASSED. THEN, SUDDENLY, ALL-ENGULFING TERROR CLUTCHED THE PLANET IN A DEATH-GRIP..


THAT CURSED HEAT! THIRTEEN THOUSAND DEATHS IN ASTROPORT ALONE! THINK OF IT...
MOVEMENT OF TURBULENCE TOWARD CENTRE MORE RAPID, MR. PRESIDENT.

YOU'RE RIGHT. THE PEOPLE OF CENTRA HAVE BEEN BROUGHT HERE, BUT...
THEY'RE DEMANDING THAT THEY BE EVACUATED FROM EARTH ITSELF. BEST YOU SPEAK TO THEM, SIR
ZENITH

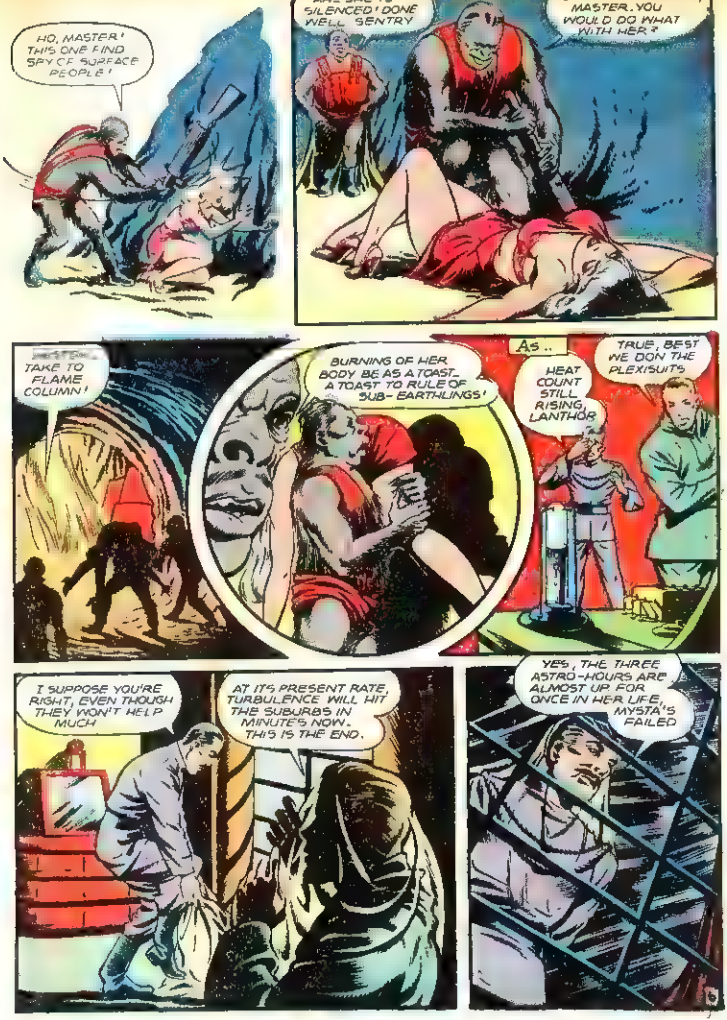
EVACUATE
THERE IS INSUFFICIENT SPACE EQUIPMENT... MYSTA HAS BEEN SUMMONED...
EVACUATE OR WE'RE DOOMED
HOW CAN SHE COMBAT THE ELEMENTS?
HMM... VISIO FLASHING
MYSTA'S SHIP, SIR, ON QUARTER POWER CALLING FROM EARTH SECTOR SEVEN'
MY GREETINGS. I TOO PLOTTED THE COURSE OF THE DISTURBANCE
..AM FOLLOWING IT'S ROUTE TOWARD CENTRE PREFER TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION ALONE WILL KEEP IN CONTACT STAND BY
IT'S UNBELIEVABLE.. TOO HORRIBLE TURBULENCE MOVING FASTER NOW . INSTRUMENTS SHOW TEMPERATURE UP ? 3 EVEN AT THIS ALTITUDE...
AUTO EXTINGUISHERS CAN'T HALT IT... WILL REACH CENTRE IN SECONDS, AND WHAT'S THAT IN THE SCANNO LENS?
A BORER SLED.. AND A MAN! IN THE PATH OF DESTRUCTION' HE'S DOOMED, UNLESS
12

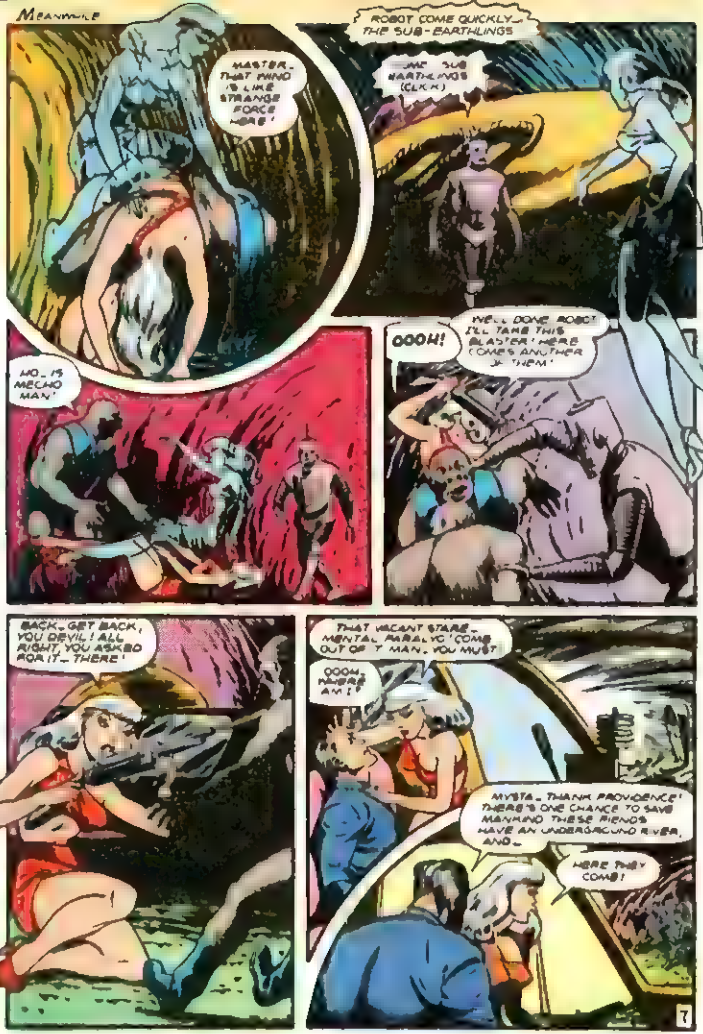
A3
OOOH CURSE THOSE OTHERS - MUST WARN PEOPLE WHERE ARE THEY? CITY LIKE A FURNACE
PLASTEIK BUILDINGS EXPLODING THAT SPACER WHO? MYSTA!
THE FOOL - DOESN'T HE KNOW THE CITY WILL BE MELTED? COME ROBOT! WE MUST SAVE HIM!
(COME MUST SAVE (CLICK)
THAT BUILDING'S TOPPLING - LOOK OUT! LOOK OUT THERE!
OOOH - WHAT? HELP!
TOO LATE - WE'RE TOO LATE! QUICKLY, ROBOT - CLEAR AWAY THE DEBRIS! HE MAY YET LIVE!
CLEAR DEBRIS (CLICK)
AM GAVIN OF ENERGO FLAME COLUMN THEN HORR - OOOH!
DYING! BUT THAT INSIGNIA - HE'S ONE OF ENERGO, LTD.'S SCIENTISTS!
BEYOND ALL AID; BUT IN DEATH HE'S ANSWERED THE RIDDLE OF THE HOLOCAUST NOW TO CONTACT ZENITH

A5
NO WORD FROM MYSTA YET, AND STILL THE HEAT COUNT RISES. AH, THE VISIO..
I HAVE FOUND THE CAUSE OF THE TURBULENCE, LANTHOR . ALLOW ME THREE ASTRO-HOURS
THREE ASTRO-HOURS! AT PRESENT RATE OF MOVEMENT, IT WILL REACH ZENITH THEN HURRY!
MEANWHILE, FAR BELOW THE EARTH'S SURFACE ..
SEEMS AGES SINCE I LAUNCHED GAVIN'S BORER-SLED. WHAT— FOOTSTEPS!
THE SUB-EARTHLINGS! THEY'VE FOUND ME! NOW IF GAVIN DOESN'T GET THROUGH WITH THE WARNING
MASTER, OTHER MAN OF SCIENCE ESCAPE IN BORER-SLED!
NO MATTER! WITH HASTE, GUARDS, REPLACE MENTAL PARALYO INJECTION OF THIS ONE!
IS DONE, MASTER— STRUGGLES END!
NOW INTO BORER DRILL WITH! SLAVE MUST CONTINUE TO REMOVE EARTH FROM PATH OF FLAME COLUMN!
YES-YES! I OBEY, I MUST!
SOON WITH FUEL, WE TILT FLAME COLUMN TOWARD ZENITH
THE EARTH CAPITOL, YES-YES, MASTER AND THEN WE SUB-EARTHLINGS RULE SURFACE ALSO!

SOON...

AH, SITE OF ENERGO'S EXCAVATION SEALED WITH THAT GLACIER ROBOT_ THE DIS BATTERIES!
DIS BATTERIES (CLICK)
ONCE MORE FULL BLAST ON THREE
NOW_ LOWER TERRA FLAPS, ROCKETS OFF!
THERE, THAT DID IT_ TO THE CONTROLS, ROBOT! ADVANCE THROTTLE TO ONE-TENTH NORM!
WAIT HERE FOR THE SIGNAL FROM MY SPIRIT IMAGE, ROBOT
ENERGO LTD'S BORER DRILL OPERATING... JUST AS I THOUGHT! THEIR SCIENTISTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TURBULENCE...
SO THEY RETURNED AFTER THEIR EXPERIMENTS WERE FORBIDDEN_ THEY'LL PAY FOR THIS... LISTEN! WHAT?


HO, MASTER! THIS ONE FIND SAY OF SURFACE PEOPLE!
AH_ SHE IS SILENCED! DONE WELL SENTRY
SHE YET BREATHES, MASTER. YOU WOULD DO WHAT WITH HER?
TAKE TO FLAME COLUMN!
BURNING OF HER BODY BE AS A TOAST_ A TOAST TO RULE OF SUB- EARTHLINGS!
AS ..
HEAT COUNT STILL RISING, LANTHOR
TRUE, BEST WE DON THE PLEXISUITS
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, EVEN THOUGH THEY WON'T HELP MUCH
AT ITS PRESENT RATE, TURBULENCE WILL HIT THE SUBURBS IN MINUTES NOW_ THIS IS THE END.
YES, THE THREE ASTRO-HOURS ARE ALMOST UP. FOR ONCE IN HER LIFE, MYSTA'S FAILED


MASTER- THAT MIND IS LIKE STRANGE FORCE HERE!
ROBOT COME QUICKLY- THE SUB-EARTHLINGS
ONE SUB EARTHLINGS (CLICK)
WELL DONE ROBOT I'LL TAME THIS BLASTER! HERE COMES ANOTHER 'UN THEM!
OOOH!
NO- IS MECHO MAN!
BACK- GET BACK, YOU DEVIL! ALL RIGHT, YOU ASKED FOR IT- THERE!
THAT VACANT STARE- MENTAL PARALYSIS! COME OUT OF IT MAN- YOU MUST!
OOOH, WHERE AM I?
MYSTA- THANK PROVIDENCE! THERE'S ONE CHANCE TO SAVE MANKIND! THESE FIENDS HAVE AN UNDERGROUND RIVER, AND-
HERE THEY COME!

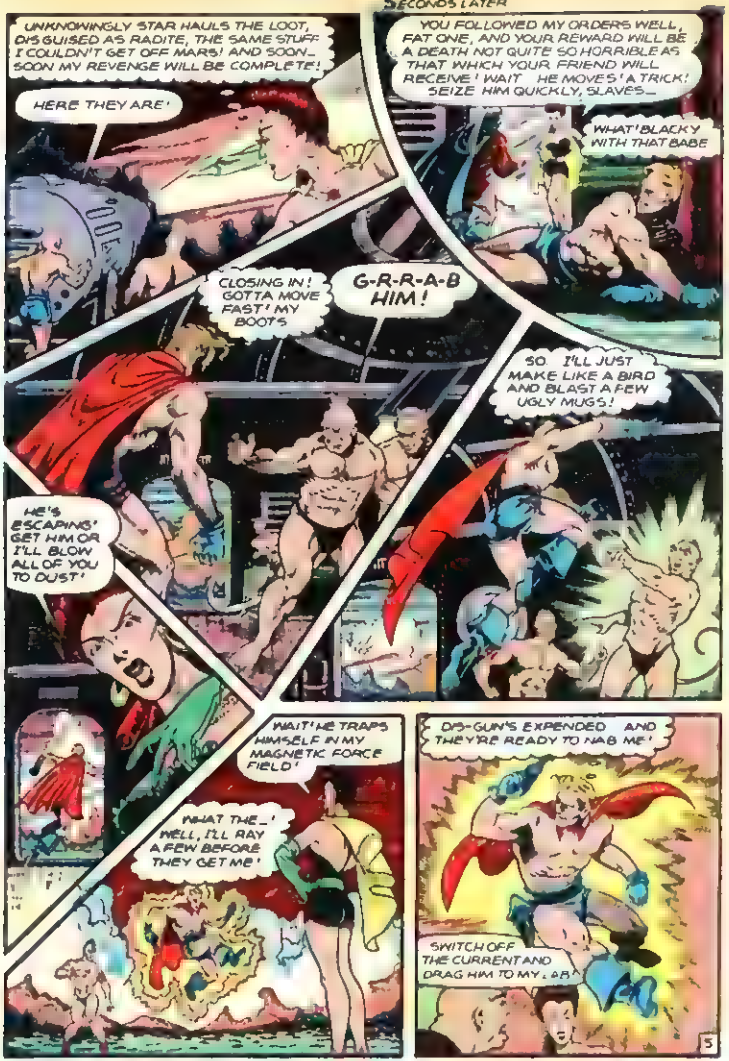
MY SHIP'S JUST UP THE CAVERN! HEAD FOR IT! HERE JOE'S OUR ONE CHANCE! THERE!
OOH—THE DAM
A-A-A-A...
ALL RIGHT NOW—HURRY! TO THE CONTROLS, ROBOT! ROCKETS MESHED—POWER FULL ON!
AS
WHY IT'S UNBELIEVABLE! THE TURBULENCE HAS ALMOST ABATED!
AND THE HEAT COUNT'S DROPPING!
YOU'VE NO FURTHER FEARS OF THE DISTURBANCE LANTHOR HAVE ENERJO SCIENTIST PICKED UP AT REFUELING STATION "A" I'LL HEAD FOR THE MOON NOW
YOU'RE RIGHT—IT'S ACTUALLY GETTING COOLER! WE'RE SAFE—SAFE! AND LISTEN—THE VISIO SEE WHO'S CALLING, LANTHOR

STAR PIRATE
by LEN DODSON
DEEP IN THE PURPLE HUED SHADE OF THE UPPER SPACE LANES, STAR PIRATE'S SHIP LURKED, WAITING TO POUNCE... AND, THEN, OUT OF THE MISTS PLUNGED A LOOT-LADEN CRUISER, JET-FLAMES TRAILING BEHIND LIKE THE BECKONING FINGERS OF A SINISTER LORELEI...
OKAY, BLACKY, GET READY. WE'RE GOING TO ATTACK!
HEY WAIT, STAR! THAT LOOKS LIKE VERTHA'S SHIP! THAT SHE-PIRATE IS BAD POYSON!
CAUGHT 'EM... NEAT! NOW WAIT!
CUT IT, YOU OLD NANNY GOAT! YOU SAW HER JUST HI-JACK THAT SPACE-FREIGHTER. MUST BE A MILLION CREDITS ABOARD! SWITCH ON THAT TRACTO BEAM!
OKAY, BUT I'M TELLING YOU... YOU'LL BE SORRY!
HEY, VERTHA, PIRATE SHIP OVERHAULING US. FULL SPEED AHEAD!
PARALLEL THEIR COURSE, AND THROW OUT THE SUSPENSO-PLANK!
MURPHY ANDERSON

COME ON_ BEFORE THAT PARALYSIS EFFECT FROM THE TRACTO BEAM WEARS OFF THE CREW!
OKAY! BUT LOOK, STAR_ IT_IT IS VERTHA!
RELIEVE THE LADY OF THAT HEAVY BAG, BLACKY! COME ON, SNAP THE LEAD OUT OF YOUR BRITCHES!
SO YOU'RE STAR PIRATE, EH, YOU HEEL!
FOOLS! DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HI-JACK VERTHA AND GET AWAY WITH IT? WHY, I'LL HOUND YOUR BLASTED HIDES TILL DOOMSDAY! I'LL_I'LL..
TUT, TUT! CAREFUL YOU DON'T BUST A BLOOD VESSEL, VERTHA!
SOON
LOOKS LIKE THE OLD GAL WAS PLENTY MAD! THINK SHE'LL TRY TO GET EVEN?
YEAH YEAH BUT IT WUZ A NICE HAUL, STAR_AND LISTEN, I KNOW A WAY WE CAN DOUBLE IT! ME FOR A NICE BIG CRAP GAME!
BUT NEARBY
THERE THEY ARE! REMEMBER YOUR PARTS_BRUK, YOU PLANT THE BROOCH AS A WAGER, AND MAKE SURE THE FAT-FACED FOOL WINS IT! AS FOR STAR PIRATE
LATER AT A SPACE GAMBLING DIVE
ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN, PROCEED. I'LL COVER ANY PART OF TEN THOUSAND TAOLS!
SURE YOU CAN WIN, BLACKY?
YEAH! LOOK HERE
SEE! I CAN'T LOSE! THESE DICE ARE RADIONICALLY CONTROLLED! HEH! HEH!
OKAY_PUT UP AND ROLL!

BEG YOUR PARDON, SIR. THERE'S A CALL FOR STAR PIRATE ON THE PUBLIC VIZI-RAD.
THAT'S ME, PAL, THANKS!
THANKS, EH?
HO, MY BEARDED FRIEND, YOU SEEM LUCKY THIS EVENING! CARE TO WAGER FIVE THOUSAND TAOLS AGAINST THIS BROOCH? IT'S WORTH FIVE TIMES THAT MUCH
THROW IT UP, SUCKER! YOU MUST BE BEGGING TO LOSE IT! OLD BLACKY'S HOTTER THAN A BLASTER! READ 'EM AND WEEP!
OH WELL, EASY COME, EASY GO!
HA! THE FOOL FELL FOR IT NEATLY! NOW TO TELL VERTHA!
THE BIG DOPE—LIKE TAKING CANDY OFF A KID! WONDER WHERE STAR IS?
WHILE
SPACE PO. E, STAR WOULD YOU CARRY A CARGO OF "URELY NEEDED RADITE TO SATURN? IT'S REALLY URGENT. AND WE'LL GRANT YOU IMMUNITY FROM SEIZURE AND MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE, AS WELL
HAULING CARGO IS OUT OF MY LINE. BUT SEEING IT'S URGENT... AND THE IMMUNITY, WELL.
LET'S GO, BLACKBEARD, WE'VE GOT US A JOB HAULING RADITE TO SATURN!
WHA—? A JOB? WITH ALL THIS MOOLA
SOON
YOU MUST BE GETTING SOFT-HEADED, STAR, HAULING A SHIP FULL OF RADITE! THAT STUFF'S PRICELESS, AND, BESIDES, WE'D MAKE A NICE LURE FOR PIRATES.. OH, WELL...
HMM! THIS BROOCH LOOKS INTERESTING. WON'T TELL STAR. I'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE PEEK
THE ONLY THING THAT BOTHERS ME IS... THAT CARGO WE LOADED DIDN'T LOOK LIKE RADITE!
BUT I GUESS IT'S ON THE UP AND UP! HEY, WHY SO QUIET? WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, YOU OLD DEVIL?
WHAT THE—? CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF IT! WHY, IT'S—IT'S

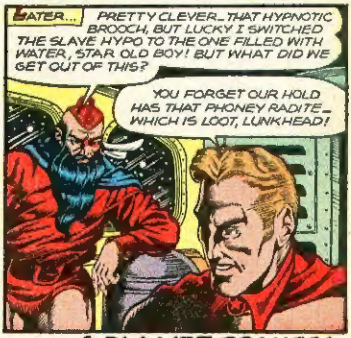
HAH! SO THE FOOL FELL FOR THE SMOOTH TALK BY MY PHONEY SPACE POLICEMAN ON THE VIZI-GRAPH! AND THE FAT BOOB STARES AT THE HYPNO-BROOCH! NOW TO SEND MY THOUGHT COMMANDS!
YOU WILL KNOCK STAR PIRATE UNCONSCIOUS, AND BLAST YOUR SHIP DUE COURSE FOUR GRID, TEN ROTAS, AND MY MAGNO-RAY WILL GUIDE YOU IN TO THIS HIDDEN ASTEROID!
SWITCH OFF THE FORCE-RAY BARS, AND BEAM OUT THE MAGNO-RAY! STEP LIVELY, LOUTS!
LISTEN CAREFULLY BEARDED ONE
YES! YES, MISTRESS VERTHA, WE OBEY!
IF BLACKY FOLLOWS MY ORDERS, THEY SHOULD BE HERE SOON! AND WHEN THEY DO - THEY'LL BOTH BE SLAVES LIKE THOSE AT THE MAGNO RAY - WHO OBEY MY EVERY WHIM ON THE THOUGHT MACHINE!
As
CONK STAR MUST OBEY VERTHA!
SCAN THE LANES WITH THAT RAY, SLUGGARDS!
COME HERE, YOU REPROBATE, AND TAKE OVER I NEED SOME SLEEP
SLEEP YER GONNA GET, PALLY!
WHAT?! OOH
NOW LET'S SEE - FOUR GRID, TEN ROTAS ON COURSE!
AND THERE'S THE MAGNO-RAY! I'LL COAST IN ON THAT!


UNKNOWINGLY STAR HAULS THE LOOT, DISGUISED AS RADITE, THE SAME STUFF I COULDN'T GET OFF MARS! AND SOON... SOON MY REVENGE WILL BE COMPLETE!
HERE THEY ARE!
SECONDS LATER
YOU FOLLOWED MY ORDERS WELL, FAT ONE, AND YOUR REWARD WILL BE A DEATH NOT QUITE SO HORRIBLE AS THAT WHICH YOUR FRIEND WILL RECEIVE! WAIT HE MOVES! A TRICK! SEIZE HIM QUICKLY, SLAVES...
WHAT! BLACKY WITH THAT BABE
CLOSING IN! GOTTA MOVE FAST! MY BOOTS
G-R-R-A-B HIM!
SO I'LL JUST MAKE LIKE A BIRD AND BLAST A FEW UGLY MUGS!
HE'S ESCAPING! GET HIM OR I'LL BLOW ALL OF YOU TO DUST!
WAIT! HE TRAPS HIMSELF IN MY MAGNETIC FORCE FIELD!
WHAT THE...! WELL, I'LL RAY A FEW BEFORE THEY GET ME!
D'S-GUN'S EXPENDED AND THEY'RE READY TO NAB ME!
SWITCH OFF THE CURRENT AND DRAG HIM TO MY LAB!
5

SOON...
LUCKY I SNOOPED AROUND BEFORE SHE GOT HERE. NOW IF THIS WORKS...
HI, VERTHA! SAY, WHAT'S THE PITCH?
YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS YOUR FRIEND BECOMING MY SLAVE! QUICKLY, THE HYPO!!
JABBED HIM! WON'T TAKE LONG NOW!
HOLD THE LINE, VERTHA, IF HE'S GONNA BE A SLAVE, I WANT HIM. I'VE BEEN HIS LONG ENOUGH! HOW ABOUT ROLLING THE BONES FOR HIM?
VERY WELL, FAT ONE!
THIS FOOL DIES SOON ANYWAY! I CANNOT LOSE...
SEVEN! I WIN!
HEH! HEH! SHE DOESN'T KNOW THESE DICE ARE RADIONICALLY CONTROLLED!
YOU WIN? THAT'S A LAUGH! VERTHA ALWAYS WINS! GET UP, STUPID!
WHAT? I... TRICKED!!
GUARD! GUARD!
BRING A HYPO SYRINGE OF SLAVE SERUM, QUICKLY!! THIS SAP MUST BE RENDERED HARMLESS!
OOH!
STUPID? WHY, YOU SHE SLAVE-DRIVER, I'LL_
WAIT! STAR'S MOVING...
GET HIM!
6

OKAY, VERTHA, YOUR INNING IS OVER! UP, BLACKIE! NOW I'LL DO A LITTLE INJECTING AROUND HERE— WITH DIS-RAYS!
GOTTA MAKE TRACKS FOR THAT ROOM WHERE SHE KEEPS THE THOUGHT-MACHINE!
THEY CAN'T ESCAPE! HAH, MY FORCE-RAY!

IT'S CURTAINS, OL' PAL!
CUT THE BABBLING AND STAND FAST! ALL RIGHT, YOU CHARACTERS, HOLD UP! I HAVE CONTROL OF YOUR THOUGHTS. LISTEN, LET DOWN THE FORCE-RAY AND HOLD VERTHA TILL WE ESCAPE!


LATER...
PRETTY CLEVER— THAT HYPNOTIC BROOCH, BUT LUCKILY I SWITCHED THE SLAVE HYPO TO THE ONE FILLED WITH WATER, STAR OLD BOY! BUT WHAT DID WE GET OUT OF THIS?
YOU FORGET OUR HOLD HAS THAT PHONEY RADITE— WHICH IS LOOT, LUNKHEAD!

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Size	Price	Size	Price
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